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REPORT

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REFERENCES

This is UNEVALUATED Information

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1. There is discontent, some tension, an absence of sincere allegiance, and a latent spirit of resistance throughout the Soviet zone of Germany. It is conceivable that here and there limited manifestations of resistance, growing out of food shortages, a reaction to attempts to tighten labor discipline, or a specific local situation with a long bad history of near-violence, have appeared and may continue to appear with even greater frequency during the next six months. But it would be a mistake to take these manifestations as evidence that another 17 June, a general rebellion against the SED, is about to break loose.
2. There is a tendency among those who are sensitive because they did not foresee the events of 17 June 1953 to make this good by rather ill informed efforts to foresee and predict a repeat performance. They are ill informed not merely because improved security controls and the massive flight of more than a million persons from East Germany during 1953 and 1954 have diminished their sources of information, but also because they do not recognize the peculiarly accidental character of the events of 17 June.¹
3. Two consequences of the 1953 uprising are: first, the subject population is convinced that as long as the present international stalemate endures they cannot by any resistance activity of their own alter the situation within the Russian zone; second, the authorities of the DDR, while avoiding sharp provocation in raising norms and tightening labor discipline, are ready and able to stifle any overt resistance before it gains momentum.
4. In the case of the "norms", i.e., standards of industrial productivity, it may be pointed out that they are much lower than those prevailing in West Germany, even after discounting the heavier capital investment in plant modernization which has taken place in the West. There is a movement under way in East Germany to raise these norms, perhaps even raise them to the level promulgated in May 1953, but it is a far better planned operation than that of 1953, not only in point of psychological preparation, but also tactically. The proclamation may take place during the FDGB congress in June or July 1955.

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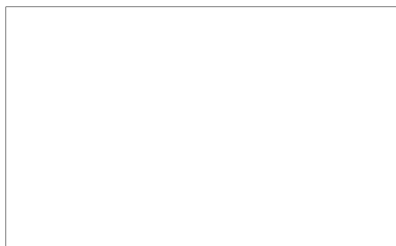
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- 2 -



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1.  Comment: The RIAS broadcasts on 16 June 1953, covering events in East Berlin, resulted in the simultaneous and spontaneous appearance of masses of people on the streets of almost every city and town of East Germany on the morning of 17 June 1953. Neither strikes nor demonstrations were planned; there was no organized leadership. The authorities, including SED party functionaries, were caught completely unprepared, and the almost universal character of the demonstrations was more than they could cope with. The Soviet Army preserved the SED government of the DDR.

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